Migration Statistics Quarterly Summary for Scotland

Release date: 28 February 2020
Next update: May 2020

A summary of the latest migration statistics for Scotland. This brings together data from a range of sources to give an overview of key migration trends in Scotland, and presents it alongside comparable UK-level data. It includes data published by National Records of Scotland (NRS), the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the Home Office, and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Main points

- International migration has consistently added to Scotland's population since the EU expansion in 2004. Latest data shows 10,000 more people coming to Scotland from overseas than leaving in 2018.
- There are signs of a slowdown in migration to Scotland. Long-term international net migration has fallen from its recent peak in 2015, but there are still more people coming from overseas than leaving each year.
- The total number of non-British nationals living in Scotland (373,000 people) has remained broadly stable over the year.
- Polish remains the most common non-British nationality, with Polish nationals making up over a quarter (97,000) of all non-British nationals living in Scotland in the year to June 2019.
- Overseas nationals require a National Insurance number (NINo) to work in the UK and this can provide a view on work-related immigration (regardless of length of stay). Latest DWP data for the year ending December 2019 shows there were 48,200 NINo allocations to overseas nationals in Scotland; 56% of these were to EU nationals. Whilst NINo allocations are higher than the previous year, this is likely to reflect the processing of pending applications and increased operational activity resulting from the opening of two new processing centres.

This summary provides Scottish-specific secondary analysis of the Migration Statistics Quarterly Report (MSQR) published by ONS which focuses on the latest migration statistics at UK-level. ONS are leading a programme of work to transform migration statistics by making use of all available data to provide a richer and deeper understanding of migration. The MSQR has been reclassified as experimental statistics to support this period of development.

Latest migration statistics for Scotland and the UK

To fully understand migration trends, we need to consider all available data sources and look at not just year-on-year change but also evidence over a longer time series. The table below sets out the latest estimates across a range of sources, and analysis over time is then shown on later slides.

- In the year to December 2018, 10,000 more people came to Scotland than left, adding to the population. There were 32,000 people moving to Scotland and 22,000 people leaving in this period.
- The number of non-British nationals living in Scotland stood at 373,000 people, broadly similar to the previous year.
- There were 48,200 National Insurance number (NINo) allocations to overseas nationals in Scotland in the year to December 2019. Whilst this is an increase on the previous year it is likely to reflect the processing of pending applications and increased operational activity resulting from the opening of two new processing centres.

Measure	Source	Scotland			UK		
		Change over year	Latest estimate	Year ending	Change over year	Latest estimate	Year ending
Net migration	LTIM*	–	+10,000	Dec 2018	–	+240,000	Sep 2019
In migration	LTIM*	–	32,000	Dec 2018	–	642,000	Sep 2019
Out migration	LTIM*	–	22,000	Dec 2018	–	402,000	Sep 2019
Non-British nationals	APS	–	373,000	Jun 2019	–	6,194,000	Jun 2019
National Insurance number allocations	DWP	↑	48,200	Dec 2019	↑	766,100	Dec 2019

* Experimental statistics undergoing development

↑ Increase ↓ Decrease – Change is not statistically significant

Migration flows*

Estimates of long-term international migration (LTIM) to Scotland and the UK, measuring those with an intention to stay 12 months or more.

Migration continues to add to the population at both UK and Scotland level.

At Scotland level:

- Overall net migration has decreased since 2015.
- Net international migration still remains positive with 10,000 more people coming to Scotland from overseas than leaving in 2018.

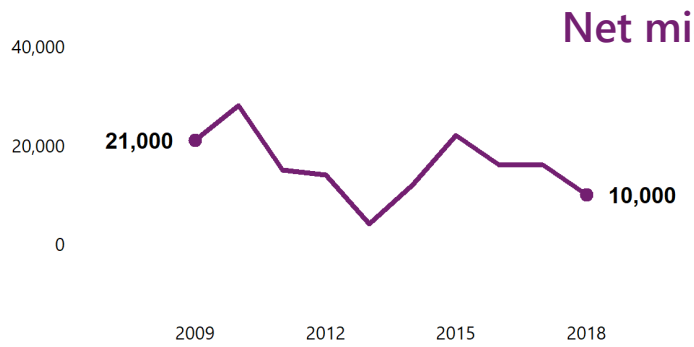
At UK level, in the year to September 2019:

- 240,000 more people came to the UK than left, adding to the UK's population.
- There were 642,000 people moving to the UK and 402,000 people leaving the UK in this period.
- Long term immigration, emigration and net migration have been broadly stable since the end of 2016.

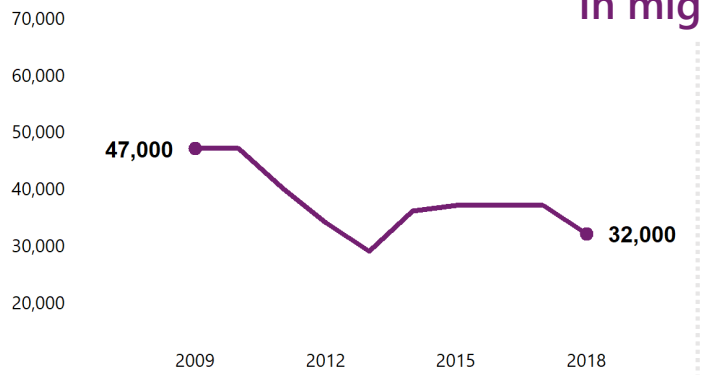
- Experimental statistics undergoing development
- UK net migration estimates have been revised for calendar years 2001 to 2011, as well as mid years 2001-02 to 2010-11; however, no revised estimates of net migration are available for the years ending Sep 2010 and Sep 2011.

Scotland

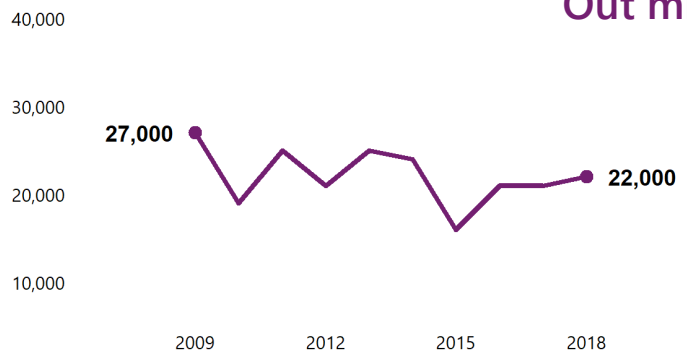
Net migration



In migration

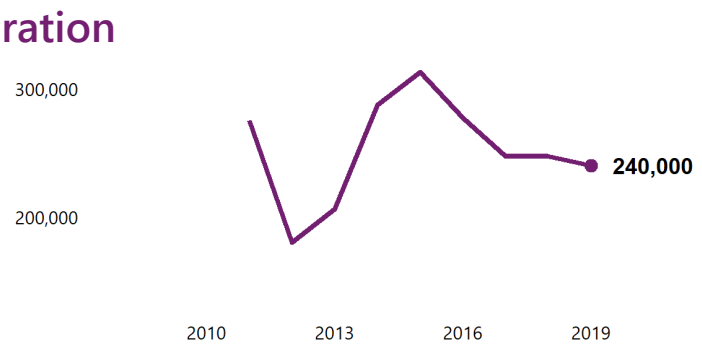


Out migration

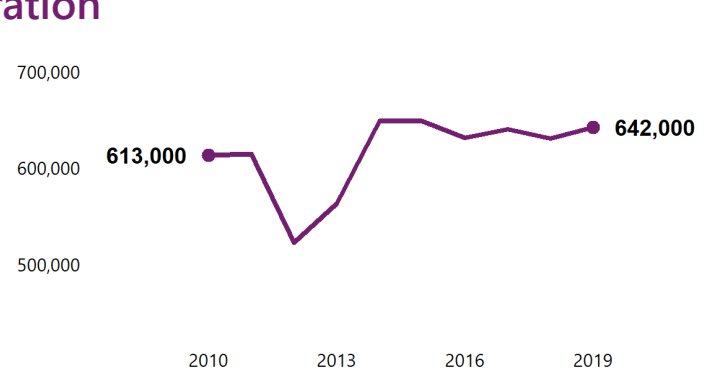


UK

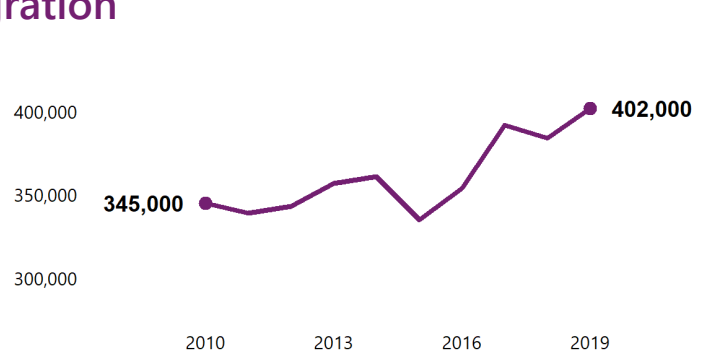
Net migration



In migration



Out migration



Migrant stocks

Estimates of the number of non-British nationals living in Scotland and the UK at a particular point in time, from the Annual Population Survey (APS).

In Scotland:

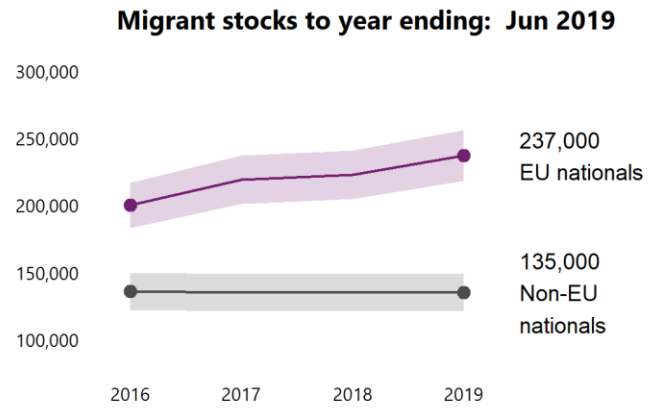
- There were 237,000 EU nationals living in Scotland in the year to June 2019, and over half of those people were nationals of EU8 countries.
- There were 135,000 non-EU nationals, accounting for 36% of the non-British population.
- Polish remained the most common non-British nationality in the year to June 2019, with Polish nationals accounting for over a quarter (97,000) of all non-British nationals living in Scotland.

In the UK:

- The non-British population of the UK was 6.2 million in the year to June 2019, where around 1 in 10 of the UK population had a non-British nationality and the majority (60%) of these held an EU nationality.
- Polish has been the most common non-British nationality (902,000) in the UK since 2007. Polish nationals accounted for 15% of the total non-British residents in the UK in the year ending June 2019.

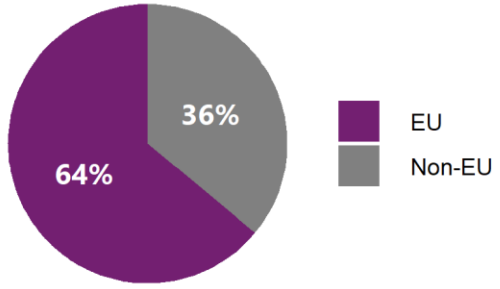
* Shaded sections indicate the 95% confidence intervals

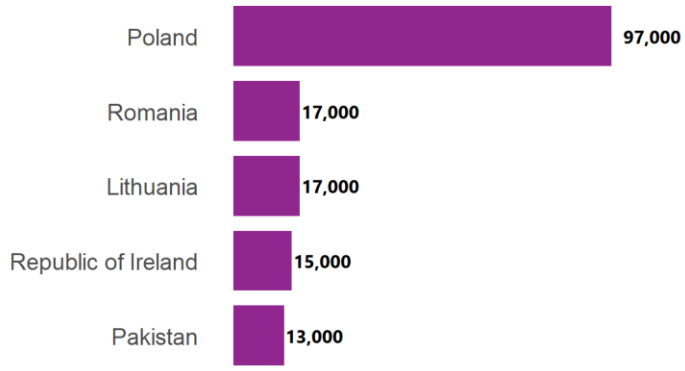
Scotland



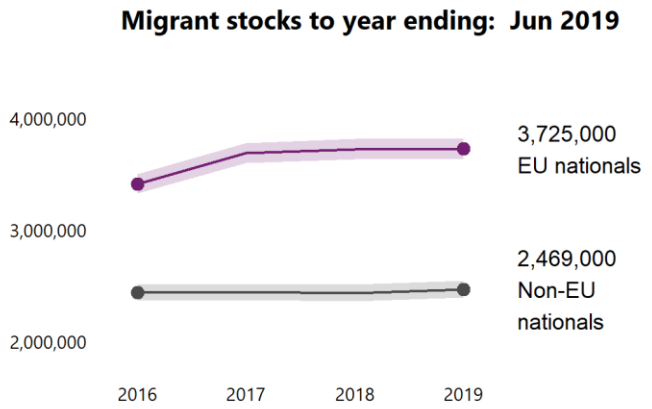
Non-British nationals in Scotland: 373,000

6.9% of total population



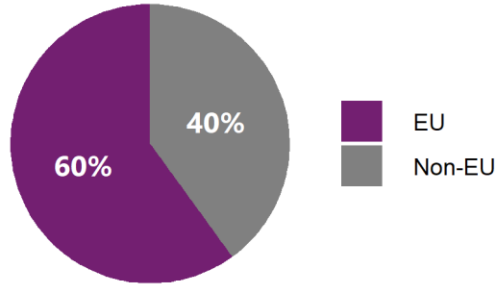


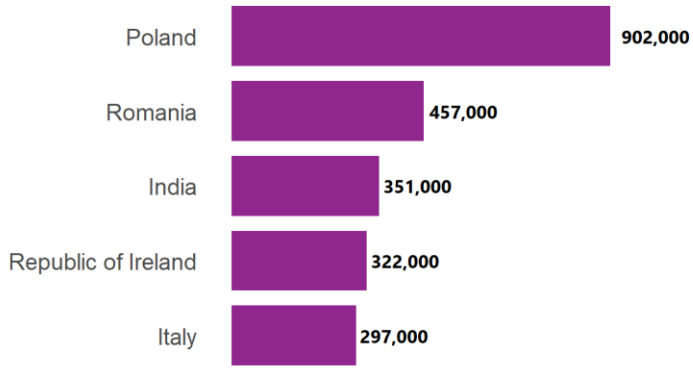
UK



Non-British nationals in the UK: 6,194,000

9.4% of total population





National Insurance number (NINo) allocations

Statistics on National Insurance numbers (NINo) allocated to adult overseas nationals come from the Department for Work and Pensions, and are updated every quarter. These are a measure of non-British nationals who are applying for a NINo for the first time, for the purpose of working and accessing benefits in the UK.

Scotland

In the year ending Dec 2019, there were a total of 48,200 NINo allocations to adult overseas nationals in Scotland (up by 27% from previous year).

- 27,200 of these allocations were to (non-UK) EU nationals (up by 14% from previous year).
- 20,800 of these allocations were to non-EU nationals (up by 47% from previous year).

UK

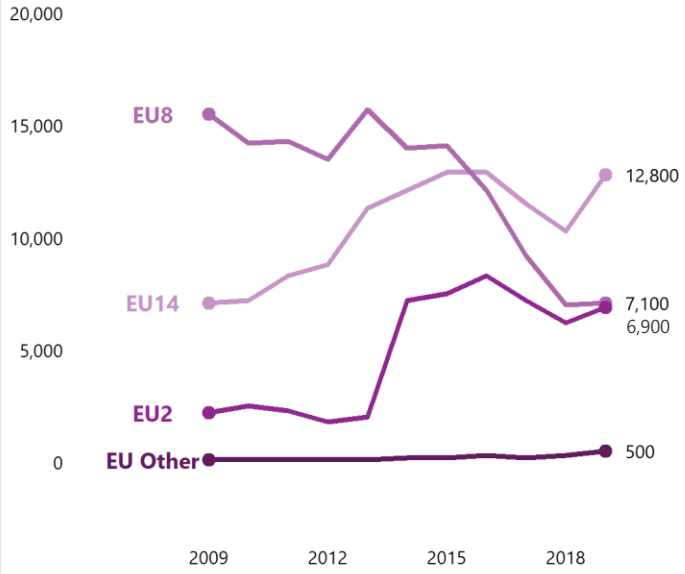
In the year ending Dec 2019, there were a total of 766,100 NINo allocations to adult overseas nationals in the UK (up by 21% from previous year).

- 456,400 of these allocations were to (non-UK) EU nationals (up by 9% from previous year).
- 307,800 of these allocations were to non-EU nationals (up by 45% from previous year).

Scotland

NINo allocations to year ending: Dec 2019

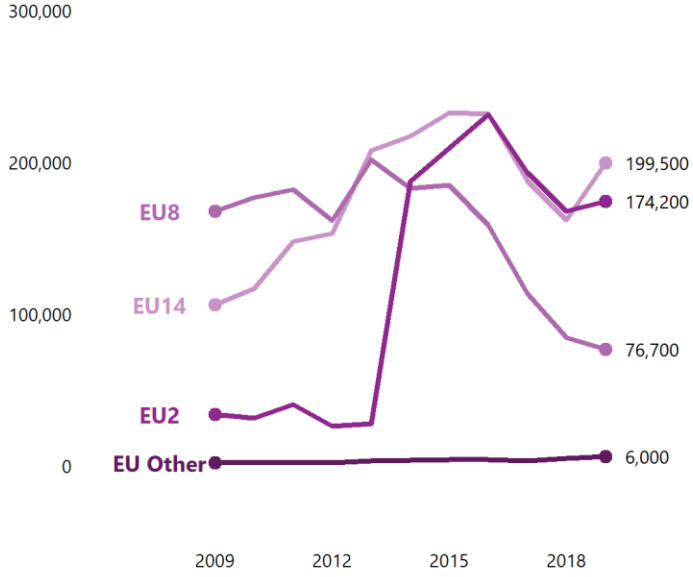
NINo allocations for EU groups to year ending: Dec 2019



UK

NINo allocations to year ending: Dec 2019

NINo allocations for EU groups to year ending: Dec 2019



National Insurance number (NINo) allocations

Scotland

UK

In the year ending Dec 2019:

- From the EU, Scotland received most registrations from EU14 countries (12,800); from non-EU, Scotland received most registrations from South Asia (5,100).
- From the EU, the UK received most registrations from EU14 countries (199,500); from non-EU, the UK received most registrations from South Asia (110,300).

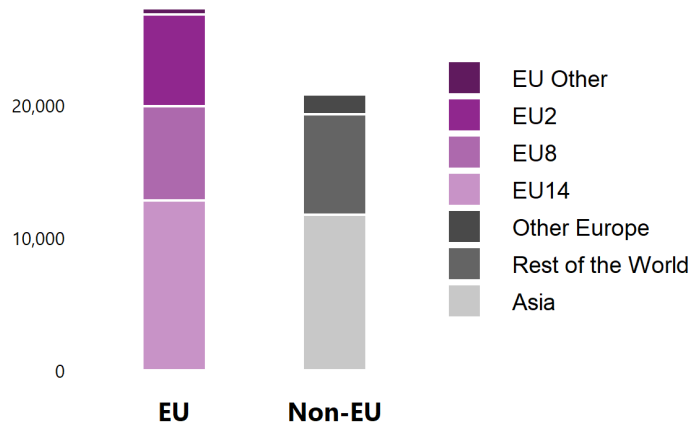
The most common individual countries applying for NINo:

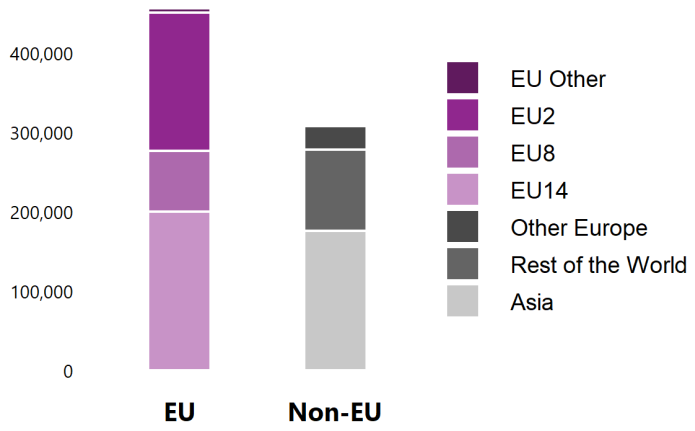
- In Scotland, Romania (8% increase from previous year) from the EU and India (61% increase from previous year) from outside of the EU.
- In the UK, Romania (1% increase from previous year) from the EU and India (71% increase from previous year) from outside the EU.

The Scottish council area that had the most new registrations in the year to Dec 2019 is Glasgow City (13,600, 28% of total registrations)

At UK level, the local authority with the most registrations was Newham (21,500, 3% of total registrations).

NINo allocations by nationality



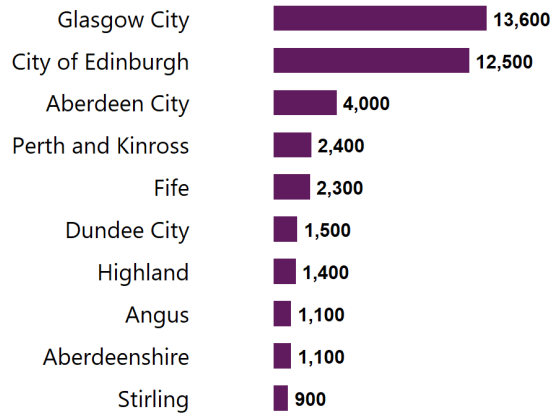


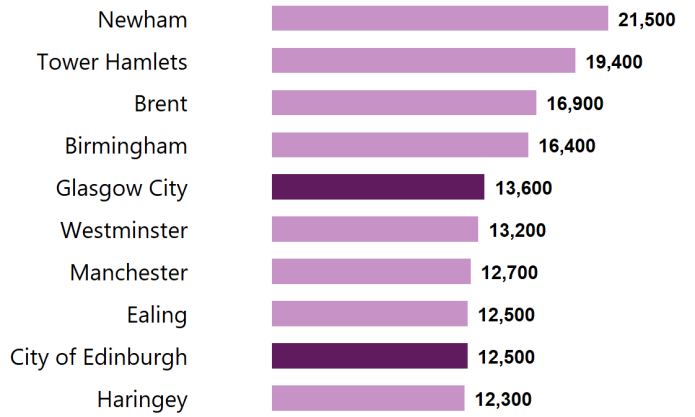
Top 5 EU and non-EU countries

EU		Non-EU	
Romania	4,600	India	3,700
Poland	4,000	Syria	1,700
Spain	3,000	China	1,400
Italy	2,600	United States	1,300
Bulgaria	2,300	Pakistan	1,100

EU		Non-EU	
Romania	135,700	India	78,100
Italy	52,700	Pakistan	19,900
Poland	41,000	China	14,300
Bulgaria	38,600	United States	14,000
Spain	38,100	Nigeria	13,700

Top 10 local authorities





Refugees & Citizenship

Scotland

UK

The data in this section comes from the Home Office. The refugee data is released quarterly, three months after the reporting period. It covers Refugees (and others) resettled under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. The citizenship data is released once a year in May and it has a 6 month lag. It indicates the number of people attending British citizenship ceremonies in the past year.

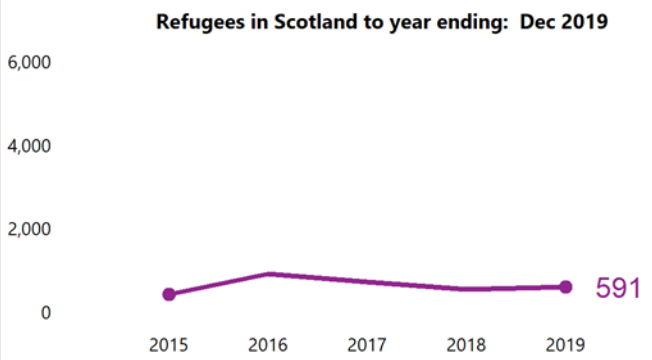
Refugees
In the year ending Dec 2019, there were 591 refugees (9% increase from previous year) resettled in Scotland and 4,408 (no change from previous year) in the whole of the UK.

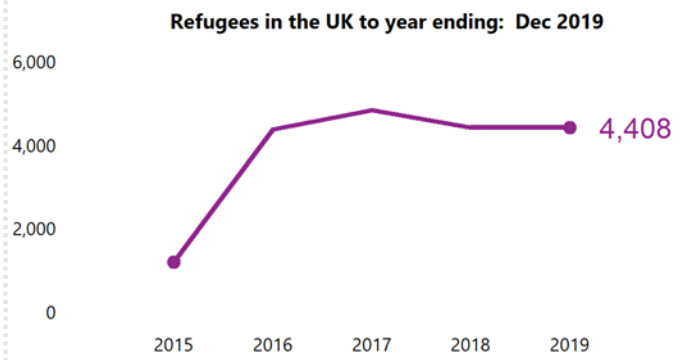
In Scotland, City of Edinburgh had the most resettled refugees at 121 (123 in previous year). In the UK, it was Birmingham at 166 (117 in previous year).

Citizenships
The labels on the graph indicate the number of attendees in British citizenship ceremonies and change over year for each authority.

In Scotland, City of Edinburgh had the most people attending British citizenship ceremonies (25% of total attendees in Scotland). In the whole of the UK, it was Birmingham (2% of total attendees in UK).

Refugees



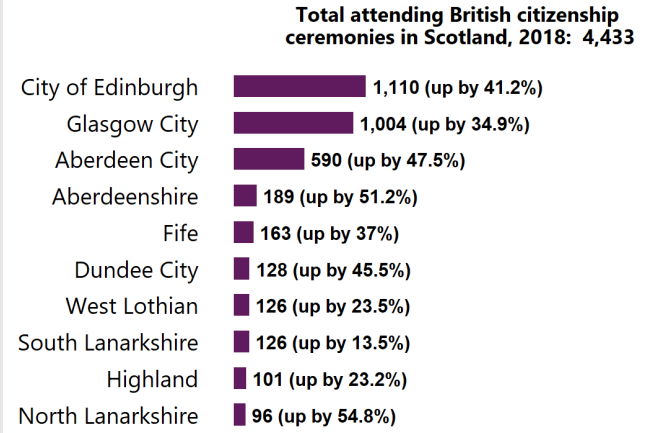


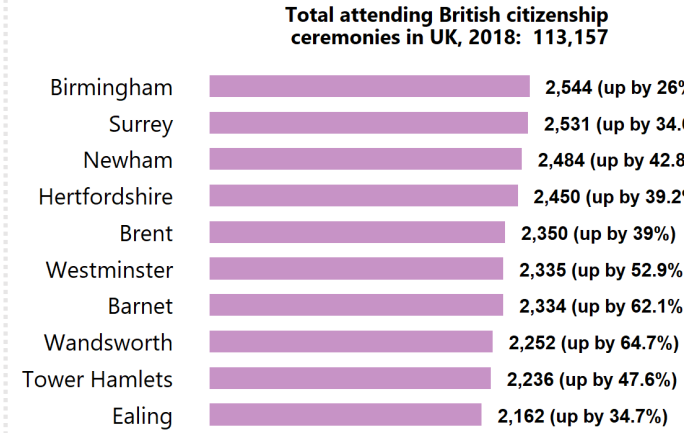
Top 5 Authorities

Authority	Resettled Refugees	% of Total
City of Edinburgh	121	20.5
North Ayrshire	65	11.0
Glasgow City	55	9.3
Aberdeenshire	45	7.6
Fife	41	6.9

Authority	Resettled Refugees	% of Total
Birmingham	166	3.8
City of Edinburgh	121	2.7
Coventry	111	2.5
Fermanagh and Omagh	107	2.4
Gateshead	93	2.1

Citizenships





Summary of data sources

Long-Term International Migration (LTIM), ONS
These statistics are published quarterly as part of the Migration Statistics Quarterly Report. They measure the number of migrants entering and leaving the country in any given period. They are typically called migrant "flows" and can be used to calculate net migration (the difference between immigration and emigration). Estimates are largely based on migrant intentions to stay in Scotland/the UK for 12 months or more. The data is sourced mainly from the International Passenger Survey.

Population by Country of Birth and Nationality, ONS and NRS
These statistics are published twice a year by ONS and NRS. They measure the size of the population (non-UK born and non-British nationals) at a particular point in time. They are typically called migrant "stocks" and are sourced from the Annual Population Survey.

National Insurance number allocations (NINo) to adult overseas nationals entering the UK, DWP
This is administrative data updated each quarter by DWP. The NINo statistics count the volume of registrations to adult non-UK nationals over a calendar quarter. A NINo is generally required if looking to work or claim benefits. The statistics are not a count of the number of adult non-UK nationals currently living in Scotland/the UK.

Immigration statistics, Home Office
The refugees resettled data is published every quarter and covers refugees (and others) resettled under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. The Citizenship data is updated once a year and indicates the number of people attending British citizenship ceremonies in a given year. Both of these measures are from administrative data published by the Home Office.

Migration Statistics, NRS
Latest migration flows for Scotland published by NRS. These include breakdowns for flows between Scotland and overseas, Scotland and the rest of the UK, and internal migration within Scotland.

Local Area Migration, NRS
This tool brings together migration statistics from a range of sources for council and NHS Board areas in Scotland. It is published annually by NRS.